

**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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GOVERNOR

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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Thursday, March 3, 2022
10:10 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

in consideration of
SB2724 SD1
RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) commends the legislature for its continued recognition of sea level rise as part of the global climate emergency. Waikiki is a significant asset to the State and has unique challenges and opportunities relating to coastal erosion and sea level rise. The OPSD **supports** the intent of **SB 2724 SD1** and provides the following **comments**:

To provide flexibility to address needs and concerns that may be raised during the coordination process outside of those stated in this measure, the OPSD offers the following proposed amendments for the purposes of flexibility in defining the scope of work:

Page 4, Lines 1-5 “SECTION 2. (a) The office of planning and sustainable development shall ~~[convene a Waikiki adaptation and resilience plan working group as]~~ establish a pilot project to develop an adaptation and resilience plan that addresses the climate change and sea level rise impacts in the Waikiki special district.

Page 4, Lines 6-7 (b) The Waikiki adaptation and resilience plan shall ~~[include]~~ assess nature-based, as appropriate and urban designs for sea-level rise...

Page 4, Lines 13-17 (c) The ~~[working group]~~ office of planning and sustainable development shall ~~[comprise]~~ coordinate with representatives from the University of Hawaii, city and county of Honolulu, department of land and natural resources, Waikiki beach special improvement district association, and Waikiki neighborhood board.

Page 5, Lines 1-2 (d) ~~[In developing the]~~ The Waikiki adaptation and resilience plan ~~[the working group]~~ shall ~~[obtain and]~~ use the best data ...

Page 5, Line 5-6 The ~~[working group]~~ Waikiki adaptation and resilience plan may consider the coastal flood adaptation architectural design...

Page 5, Line 15 ~~[(e) The working group shall dissolve on January 1, 2024.]~~

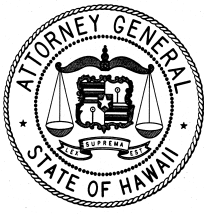
The OPSD recognizes that this scale of planning is typically county-led and therefore OPSD would work closely on the City and County of Honolulu to ensure that the outcomes funded by this proposed measure are complementary to and consistent with county planning efforts without being duplicative of any activities currently being undertaken at the county level.

The OPSD additionally recognizes that establishing and developing sustained state capacity for sea level rise adaptation efforts is necessary to support and coordinate the implementation of activities that will be consistent with the final Waikiki Adaptation and Resilience Plan. Staffing capacity for the OPSD Coastal Zone Management Program is funded through a federal award. Staff workplans are submitted prior to the fiscal year and must be consistent with addressing federal mandates and the CZM federally approved strategy. Current strategic priorities serve to implement the Hawaii Ocean Resources Management Plan which focuses on addressing management gaps and collaboration with CZM network agencies to improve upon **statewide policy**.

Current CZM workplans do not include allocations for the management of this regional-scale project. Given the significance of the value of Waikiki at both the state and county level, a project of this significance requires staff time with a dedicated position (Exempt, 1.0 FTE, Salary ~\$81,744) to support the initiative. OPSD would require additional staff capacity in order to adequately lead, manage, and procure consultant services to carry out the activities in this mandate as well to staff future coordination efforts to ensure activities in the area are consistent with the Waikiki Adaptation and Resilience Plan.

The OPSD appreciates the overall concept of this bill, but we are concerned that its passage may replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE, 2022**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. NO. 2724, S.D. 1, RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

DATE: Thursday, March 3, 2022 **TIME:** 10:10 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 211, Via Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY.**
(For more information, contact Bryan C. Yee,
Deputy Attorney General, at (808) 586-1501)

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following technical comments:

Senate Bill No. 2724, S.D. 1, among other things, proposes to establish a working group to work with the Office of Planning and Sustainability to develop a Waikiki adaptation and resilience plan to address climate change and sea level impacts in the Waikiki special district.

The bill creates a working group that will be subject to chapter 92, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, but does not specify the number of members, how the members are selected, or to which department the working group is administratively attached.

Although there are different ways in which this issue could be addressed, we offer the following wording as one alternative. On page 4, lines 13 through 20, replace subsection (c) with the following:

- (c) There is established within the department of _____ for administrative purposes the Waikiki adaptation and resilience working group.
- (d) The working group shall include:
 - (1) The University of Hawaii president, or designee;
 - (2) The _____ for the City and County of Honolulu, or designee;
 - (3) The director of the department of land and natural resources, or designee;

- (4) The president of the Waikiki beach special improvement district association, or designee;
- (5) The chair of the Waikiki neighborhood board, or designee; and
- (6) Such other private and public stakeholders, including residents and owners of properties in Waikiki, that are critical to developing a sea level rise community adaptation and resilience plan for Waikiki, as the working group chooses to allow, all of whom shall not be subject to section 26-34.

If the Committee decides to make the amendment suggested above, the changes in the designations from subsection (d) to subsection (e) (page 5, line 1) and from subsection (e) to subsection (f) (page 5, line 15) should be also made.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide these comments.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented to the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 10:10 a.m.

by

Vassilis L. Syrmos, Vice President for Research and Innovation
University of Hawai'i System

SB 2724 SD1 – RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION

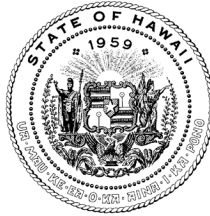
Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) is in support of SB 2724 SD1 which requires the State Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to establish a pilot program that will develop a Waikīkī adaptation and resilience plan to address the projected impacts of climate change and sea level rise in the Waikīkī special district.

As a complement to the excellent research, education and policy efforts put forth by both Hawai'i Sea Grant and the Climate Resiliency Initiative (formerly the Coastal Geology Group) in UH Mānoa's heralded School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, the College of Engineering's Coastal Erosion Shoreline Team possess additional research expertise in geotechnics, transportation, infrastructure and shoreline hardening that can provide working, technical solutions to this important pilot program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
POST OFFICE BOX 621
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SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS

Thursday, March 03, 2022
10:10 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211, Via Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2724, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTION

Senate Bill 2724, Senate Draft 1 proposes to require the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development to establish a pilot program to develop a Waikiki adaptation and resilience plan to address climate change and sea level impacts in the Waikiki special district. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the bill.**

The proposed project would build off the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission's 2017 report, *Hawaii Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report*. This report has been extremely valuable in the Department's mission to protect the State's natural and cultural resources and has guided many of our decisions over the past five years.

This bill will take the macro-level recommendations contained in the commission's report, along with other studies, to create a community-level adaptation and resilience plan for Waikiki under the leadership of the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development. The Department believes that a successful pilot project will provide a useful model for other coastal communities in the State that are facing serious threats from sea level rise.

In order to ensure the success of the project, the Department would request that the Committee consider including an implementation strategy as a component of the plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
March 3, 2022 at 10:10am
Senate Capitol (Via Video conference)

Waikiki Beach Special Improvement District Association

By
Rick Egged, President

SB 2724 SD1– RELATING TO SEA-LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

The Waikiki Beach Special Improvement District Association (WBSIDA) **strongly supports Senate Bill (SB 2724 SD1)**. SB 2724 SD1 requires the State Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) to convene a working group to develop a Waikiki resilience plan to address climate change and sea level impacts in the Waikiki special district. This effort is an important step towards the development of an adaptation and resilience strategy for Waikiki and will serve as framework and demonstration for other communities in Hawai'i.

The Hawaii State Legislature has correctly recognized that Hawai'i is experiencing the impacts of climate change and coastal hazards including the effects of sea level rise and coastal erosion. These threats include; coastal hazards and climate change impacts including the effects of increased frequency and severity of storms and drought, sea level rise, groundwater inundation and coastal erosion. Sea-level rise induced ground water inundation is of particular concern to low elevation regions like Waikiki given the contribution to our economy, dense urban development and substantial coastal exposure to hazards. The intent of this bill is to develop a proactive resilience plan to prioritize actions that protect, preserve, and where desirable, create, restore or improve the quality of the environment and the associated community benefits.

As described by the City and State Climate Change Commission, it is increasingly likely that we will experience 3 feet or more of sea level rise by the middle to end of this century, depending on the greenhouse gas emission scenario. Six feet or more of sea level rise by 2100 is plausible under some scenarios. High tide flooding will affect low-lying coastal areas like Waikiki decades before global mean sea level reaches these benchmarks. The Honolulu Climate Commission recommends using the 3.2 ft Sea Level Rise Exposure Area as a hazard overlay to prepare for and adapt to sea level rise impacts. This is the type of actionable information that can be used by such a task force to anticipate and plan for predicted impacts to Waikiki.

Waikīkī is a globally recognized icon of Hawai‘i and is the state’s largest tourist destination. Waikīkī generates approximately 42% of the state’s visitor industry revenue and is responsible for 8% (\$5 billion) of the Gross State Product¹. Beaches are a primary attraction for visitors to Waikīkī and perhaps the first line of defense against sea-level rise. It has been estimated that Waikīkī Beach accounts for over \$2 billion in annual income for the local economy². The beaches and myriad of world-renown surf breaks and reef ecosystem located offshore are valuable natural resources that support the environment, culture and lifestyle of Hawai‘i, and the idyllic image of Waikīkī. It is critically important to facilitate the ability to maintain these important natural resources along with maintaining the associated resilient development for the inherent economic, social, cultural and environmental value they provide to residents and visitors alike.

Policies related to coastal resilience in Hawai‘i have centered on the possible impact of sea-level rise on the active beach system and the built environment. As part of the development of new resilience policies, it is important to recognize and evaluate possible adaptation strategies with a strong understanding of the challenges, limitations and opportunities associated with some adaptive planning and design approaches for Waikīkī. The role and influence of the impacts of groundwater inundation is one example of the type of predicted impact that significantly affects land use and urban design. Similarly, due to the unique history and economy of Waikīkī there may be solutions and design approaches that are particularly well-suited for a high-density urban environment like Waikīkī that should be assessed and evaluated by the task force.

The effort to develop a resilience plan and specific resilient design guidelines for Waikīkī is consistent and supportive of the City and County of Honolulu’s (CCH) O‘ahu Resilience Strategy. The O‘ahu Resilience Strategy (ORS) is part of the CCH’s effort to develop strategies for resilience as part of the international 100 Resilient Cities network organized and hosted by the Rockefeller Foundation. One of the 44 Resilience Actions identified in the ORS is Action 14: *Establish Future Conditions Climate Resilience Design Guidelines*. This action is among many in the ORS that a task force can and should evaluate and serve as a proactive advisory guideline for climate resilience. The purpose of the Action 14 guideline is to provide step-by-step instructions on how to incorporate climate and hazard considerations into the design of City and private facilities and infrastructure but can also serve a pilot for adaptation for private development.

Waikiki Special District Guidelines (WSD)³.

Waikīkī is subject to a Special District that controls certain land uses and zoning restrictions. The purpose of a special district is to provide a means by which certain areas in the community in need of restoration, preservation, redevelopment or rejuvenation may be designated as special districts to guide development to protect and/or enhance the

¹ <http://www.waikikibid.org/>

² Waikīkī Improvement Association (2018) *Economic Impact Analysis of the Potential Erosion of Waikīkī Beach, Final Report*.

³ (Revised Ordinance of Honolulu Chapter 21 Section 9. Special District Regulations)

physical and visual aspects of an area for the benefit of the community as a whole. The Waikīkī Special District Objectives contain a total of fourteen district objectives listed including promoting the Hawaiian sense of place, guiding development with optimum benefits to the community and retaining residential sector among the objectives. There is currently no specific mention of climate change, hazards, sustainability or resilience anywhere in the Waikīkī Special District Guidelines. With recent interest in revising and updating the WSD guidelines there is an opportunity for the Waikīkī Resilience Task Force to assist in the development of the revised guidelines utilizing new urban planning and architectural design concepts such as those presented here including the Waikīkī Design Flood Elevation guidelines as one example.

The University of Hawai'i, through a collaborative research project with the School of Architecture, SOEST and Sea Grant have initiated a study on long-term visioning and climate adaptation of the buildings and landscapes in Waikīkī through a series of architectural design charrettes. The research addresses the design problem of "in-place" adaptation of a coastal urban area to flooding as sea level rises in Waikīkī and is largely based on research of other U.S. municipalities efforts to adapt to sea-level rise. This research is an essential component to implementing these land use changes over time and the type of information the Resilience Task Force could evaluate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Waikiki Beach Special Improvement District Association (WBSIDA) is dedicated to enhancing the resilience of Waikīkī by ensuring the coordinated management and long-term sustainability of Waikiki Beach and nearshore waters.

<https://www.wbsida.org/>

SB-2724-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2022 3:52:20 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/3/2022 10:10:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Michael Press	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Michael Press. I am a teacher at Ilima Intermediate in Ewa Beach on Oahu. I support this bill. I ask that you do the same.